

**St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Second Sunday of Christmas  
January 3, 2021**



## The Service

### Welcome and Preparation

#### "Joy to the World"

Author: Isaac Watts (1719)  
Tune: ANTIOCH

Olivia Ochs (violin), Sydney Ochs (guitar)

#### "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Author: John Francis Wade (attributed); Trans.: Frederick Oakeley (1841; alt.)  
Tune: ADESTE FIDELES

Gregg Burks (organ)

O come, all ye faithful,  
joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold him,  
born the king of angels.

Refrain:

O come let us adore him,  
O come let us adore him,  
O come let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above:  
"Glory to God,  
all glory in the highest!" [Refrain]

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
born this happy morning,  
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;  
Word of the Father,  
begotten, not created. [Refrain]

### The Brief Order for Confession & Forgiveness

**Pastor:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Congregation: A-MEN**

**P:** Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: A-MEN**

**P:** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

***Silence for reflection and self-examination.***

**P:** Most merciful God,

**C: We confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.**  
**A-MEN**

**P:** Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**ALL: A-MEN**

## The Lessons and Sermon

### The First Reading

Jeremiah 31:7-14

<sup>7</sup> For thus says the Lord: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, 'Save, O Lord, your people, the remnant of Israel.' <sup>8</sup> See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labour, together; a great company, they shall return here. <sup>9</sup> With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

<sup>10</sup> Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.' <sup>11</sup> For the Lord has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. <sup>12</sup> They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. <sup>13</sup> Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. <sup>14</sup> I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the Lord.

The Word of the Lord

### Psalm 147:12-20

Read responsively

<sup>12</sup> Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem;\*  
praise your God, O Zion;

<sup>13</sup> **who has strengthened the bars of your gates;\***  
**and has blessed your children within you.**

<sup>14</sup> God has established peace on your borders;\*  
and satisfies you with the finest wheat.

<sup>15</sup> **God sends out a command to the earth,\***  
**a word that runs very swiftly.**

<sup>16</sup> God gives snow like wool;\*

scattering frost like ashes.

**17 God scatters hail like bread crumbs.\*  
Who can stand against God's cold?**

**18** The LORD sends forth the word and melts them;\*  
the wind blows, and the waters flow.

**19 God declares the word to Jacob,\*  
statutes and judgments to Israel.**

**20** The LORD has not done so to any other nation;\*  
They do not know God's judgments. Hallelujah!

## **The Second Reading**

Ephesians 1:3-14

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup>just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. <sup>5</sup>He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, <sup>6</sup>to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup>In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace <sup>8</sup>that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup>he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, <sup>10</sup>as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. <sup>11</sup>In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, <sup>12</sup>so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup>In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; <sup>14</sup>this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

The Word of the Lord.

## **Prayer of the Day**

**P:** Let us pray,

**All: God, our creator and redeemer, you brought forth light to illuminate all of Creation, and gave the world your beloved Son, to shine in all darkness. Through your Spirit, comfort us, and turn us toward Christ our Savior, so that we too may shine forth his light. We pray this in the name of Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. A-MEN**

## **The Holy Gospel**

John 1:1-18

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter

**ALL: Glory to you, O Lord.**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup>(John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me." ' ) <sup>16</sup>From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup>The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord

**ALL: Praise to you, O Christ.**

**The Sermon**

**Pastor Will Bevins**

### **The Prayers of the Church**

**P:** Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence*

Redeeming God, you gather together your people from the farthest parts of the earth. Protect your church from stumbling. Let it not be overcome by sorrow, division, or despair. Make us radiant with goodness, that we might live always to the praise of your glory. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

You bring together heaven and earth. All creation testifies to your splendor. Hold the ecosystems of this earth in delicate balance, from coastlands to farmlands, forests to wetlands, deserts to rainforests. Show us new ways to live in harmony with the world around us. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

You overflow with grace upon grace. Expand the imaginations of those who serve in positions of authority. Open their hearts to the needs of their nations and communities. Protect all those in harm's way and those risking danger for the sake of others. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

You bring consolation to those who suffer. Embrace those who feel distant, excluded, or defeated. Refresh those who labor under the weight of chronic pain, and sustain everyone who is suffering from illness of body, mind, or spirit. This morning, we pray especially for Charlotte, Dee, Bill, Patti, Scott, Marge, Linda, Jeff, Doris, Mary Lou, Tom, Gwen, Paula, Jim, Ruth, Paula, Tamara, Kevin, and others we name silently and aloud. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

You come to us in the beauty of darkness and of light. Bring justice and reconciliation to communities divided by oppressions and misuse of power. Guide us to speak holy words of advocacy and truth. Help us to honor your image in one another. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

You turn our wailing into gladness and our mourning into hope. We thank you for the lives and examples of those who have died in faith. Today, we thank you especially for the life of Carolyn, and pray for your presence with her family and all who mourn her passing. With them and with the faithful of all times and places, we await with hope our inheritance in Christ. In the fullness of time, gather us all together in your mercy. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

**ALL: A-MEN**

### **The Great Thanksgiving**

*Please gather the elements (bread and wine or juice) for Communion.*

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

P: It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory; that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the god whom we cannot see.

And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**C: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might:  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us;  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, forever and ever.     **A-MEN****

### **COMMUNION**

*The body of Christ is given for you. The blood of Christ is shed for you.*

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: **A-MEN!**

### **Canticle of Praise**

**C: Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev'ryone what he has done.  
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear his name.  
He recalls his promises and leads his people forth in joy  
with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

### **Post-Communion Prayer**

P: Let us pray.

**All: We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.   **A-MEN****

## **The Benediction and Charge**

**P:** The Lord guide your steps as you walk along Christ's way;  
The Spirit fill you with Joy nothing can extinguish;  
God the giver of all things pour out blessings to share  
So others may know God's bounty.

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**C: A-MEN**

**P:** Go in Peace. Prepare the way of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God.**



St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
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Phone: (317) 838-9600  
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Reverend William Bevins, Pastor

Holly Erickson  
Music Director

Gregg Burks  
Organist

**Assisting at St. Stephen's today...**  
Reader Holly Erickson

**January 3, 2021**

**Welcome to St. Stephen's!** We are glad you have joined us for this online worship. We invite you to comment on the worship video or send us an email as a record of your attendance, and include any Prayer Requests you may have. Please include your name along with your home address and city, as well as your phone number if you'd like a call. We have been blessed to worship alongside you in spirit!

**All Who Profess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and acknowledge His Presence within the bread and wine of Holy Communion are welcome to receive the Sacrament.**

**Prayer Requests...**

Please email [pastorwill@ststephensplainfield.org](mailto:pastorwill@ststephensplainfield.org) if you'd like to join our prayer requests email.

**For care of our communities and each other, we will not meet in person for worship until after the beginning of the new year. This is a recommendation from our Bishop Bill Gafkjen and due to the rising numbers of positive COVID cases.**

**FEEDING THE HUNGRY:** This month our pantry is **Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>**. Pantry set-up will be **Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>**. We know it's a lot to ask, but please consider giving some time to this important mission. Remember us when you shop or during your regular giving. We've been so successful with this mission only because of your loyalty. God Bless.

**If you have announcements or prayer requests for the bulletin,** please send them to Peggy Graham by Friday of each week. **Cell Phone 317-796-0424. E-mail address: [denisgraham@prodigy.net](mailto:denisgraham@prodigy.net)**

**Preparing for Next Week: Monday Psalm 110 Tuesday Proverbs 22:1-9 Wednesday Epiphany of Our Lord: Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7,10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12 Thursday Acts 9:10-19a Friday Psalm 29 Saturday: Luke 5:1-11 Baptism of Our Lord: Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11**

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